

New Iran claim: Unmanned 'smart' stealth sub

Contributed by World Tribune
Wednesday, 13 August 2008

NICOSIA — Iran has reported the development of an unmanned submarine that would be deployed in the Gulf.

Officials said the unmanned underwater vessel was a stealth platform that could infiltrate enemy defenses.

Iran has sought to enhance its naval capabilities to defeat any U.S. attack in the Gulf. Teheran has also reported the development of a torpedo with a range of 300 kilometers, Middle East Newline reported.

"The vessel would enhance the Iran Navy's defensive capabilities," Iranian Defense Minister Mostafa Najjar said.

In a briefing on Aug. 12, Najjar gave few details of the new Iranian vessel. He termed the platform an "unmanned smart submarine."

Over the last five years, Iran has reported the development of several underwater vessels, including a mini-submarine meant for reconnaissance and sabotage missions. Officials said Iran was also working on a conventional naval submarine.

Najar said Iran has also developed a stealth surface vessel. He said the naval platforms along with sea-based weapons underwent recent trials.

In July 2008, Iran launched an enhanced Fajr-3 rocket. The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, which launched the weapon, said Fajr-3 could evade enemy radar detection.

Western analysts asserted that Iran was resorting to fabrication in its announcements of weapons and platform development. They said Iran's claim of firing an enhanced extended-range Shihab-3 ballistic missile in the Great Prophet-3 exercise in July was false. Instead, Iran fired legacy Shihab-3 missiles, first seen in 1998.

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